

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00
DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 SS-15
NSC-05 /066 W
-----069844 102111Z /64

R 100740Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9185
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0436

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: EAIR EIND PDEV PEPR UK LA US
SUBJECT: US AIRCRAFT OVERFLIGHT OF THE LPDR

REF A VIENTIANE 0381, B VIENTIANE 0196

1. A BRITISH EMBASSY OFFICER TOLD US APRIL 7 THAT THE BRITISH HAD ASKED LAO AVIATION IF THE LPDR WOULD PERMIT A BRITISH AIRLINE TO OVERFLY THE LPDR IN A US REGISTERED OR PILOTED AIRCRAFT, REF A. THE SOURCE SAID THAT LAO AVIATION OFFICIAL SADAPHET HAD TOLD HIM APRIL 6 THAT THE LPDR WOULD NOT RPT NOT PERMIT SUCH OVERFLIGHTS.
2. SADAPHET REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THE REASON FOR THE DENIAL WAS THAT THE "UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT" HAD NOT YET NEGOTIATED LAO OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS. HE ADVISED THE BRITISH OFFICER TO REGISTER THE AIRPLANE IN A COUNTRY THAT HAD ALREADY NEGOTIATED OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS, SUCH AS FRANCE.

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3. SADAPHET DID NOT MENTION THE PAN AMERICAN AIRLINES APPLICATION REQUESTING OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS THAT IS STILL PENDING LAO GOVERNMENT APPROVAL. SADAPHET REPORTEDLY SEEMED TO INDICATE THAT THE USG WAS HOLDING UP THE OVERFLIGHT NEGOTIATIONS. WHEN THE PAA DELEGATION VISITED VIENTIANE IN EARLY MARCH, DIRECTOR OF LAO

WAVIATION PHOUNE KHAMMOUANGHEUANG LEFT PAA VICE PRESIDENT JOHN KRIMSKY WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT THE LAO HAD AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO PAA OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS.

4. COMMENT: IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE LPDR IS NOW BACKTRACKING FROM ITS INITIAL VERBAL AGREEMENT TO GRANT OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS TO PAA AND ARE WAITING TO SEE WHAT THE VIETNAMESE WILL DO (REF B, PARA 3).

5. THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME THAT LPDR OFFICIALS HAVE CONFUSED THE FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENTS WITH THOSE OF PRIVATE COMPANIES. THE LAO MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE HAD REQUESTED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN FEBRUARY TO HELP THEM ESTABLISH A TRADING COMPANY IN HONG KONG. A BRITISH OFFICER REPORTEDLY EXPLAINED THAT HONG KONG HAD A CAPITALIST ECONOMY AND THAT MARKETING WAS HANDELED BY PRIVATE COMPANIES, NOT BY GOVERNMENTS AS IS DONE UNDER THE COMMUNIST SYSTEM. THE LAO MUST NOT HAVE UNDERSTOOD THIS CONCEPT BECAUSE IN MARCH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS CALLED IN THE BRITISH CHARGE TO REQUEST THAT HIS GOVERNMENT PURCHASE AND MARKET LAO TROPICAL WOODS IN BRITAIN. THE LAO MAY SIMILARLY BELIEVE THAT THE PAA OVERFLIGHT REQUEST IS A GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT ISSUE.

ROBERTS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NEGOTIATIONS, AIRCRAFT OVERFLIGHTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978VIENTI00436
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X4
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780154-0535
Format: TEL
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780473/aaaacjvt.tel
Line Count: 86
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fd5820b3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3016449
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US AIRCRAFT OVERFLIGHT OF THE LPDR
TAGS: EAIR, EIND, PDEV, PEPR, UK, LA, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fd5820b3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014